

DECEMBER 1966

THIS IS A  
CALL TO PRAYER  
FOR  
THE LORD'S WORK  
IN  
COLOMBIA

# COLOMBIAN NEWS

Cachipay, Cund., Colombia, S. A.

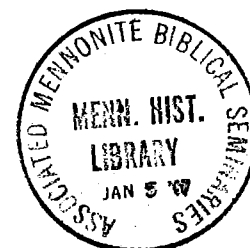
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Colombia's Poinsettia

## INFORMATION SERVICE OF THE MENNONITE MISSION IN COLOMBIA

|   |   |
|---|---|
| CHRISTMAS IN COLOMBIA . . . . .                     | 1 |
| SOUDERS TERMINATE SERVICE . . . . .                 | 2 |
| VOCATIONAL MISSIONARIES ARRIVE . . . . .            | 2 |
| KLAASSENS TAKE YEAR FURLOUGH . . . . .              | 2 |
| BETHEL COLLEGE COUPLE IN BOGOTA . . . . .           | 2 |
| BOGOTA CHURCH LAYS FIRST STONE . . . . .            | 3 |
| COLEGIOS CHANGE DIRECTORS . . . . .                 | 4 |
| GRADUATION '66 - CACHIPAY . . . . .                 | 4 |
| GRADUATION '66 - LA MESA . . . . .                  | 4 |
| CHRISTIAN MUSICIANS IN COLOMBIA . . . . .           | 4 |
| ANOLAIMA CONGREGATION INCREASES . . . . .           | 5 |
| EVANGELICAL LEADERS CONFER ON INDIAN WORK . . . . . | 5 |
| CHRISTIANITY AND DENTISTRY . . . . .                | 5 |
| MISSIONARY TOURS LOWER SOUTH AMERICA . . . . .      | 6 |
| PRAISE AND PRAYER . . . . .                         | 6 |



Colombian Staff 1966

### CHRISTMAS IN COLOMBIA

Although a Colombian Christmas is without snow that North Americans enjoy, all the other symbols of Christmas are much in evidence. Elaborate decorations light up the cities, Christmas trees are seen in the homes, shoppers purchasing gifts, and the Colombian children excited about the presence of Santa Claus.

The Evangelical Church will celebrate Christmas with special services and programs. The Mennonite Churches in Cachipay, La Mesa, Anolaima, Ibaguë, and Bogota

will present the Good News of Christ's coming with special services on Christmas Day.

While every member of the Colombian staff's thoughts turn to family and friends in the United States and Canada at Christmas time, the staff praises God for another year in which the message of the Savior has been proclaimed to the Colombian people. As your ambassadors in Colombia we thank all who make our ministry possible in this great country. We wish all the readers of the Colombian News a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a BLESSED NEW YEAR.

## SOUDERS TERMINATE SERVICE



Goodby to Colombia

Dan and Dale Souder and two children, Danny and Amy, following more than two years of V.S. service, left Colombia the last week in September. They had hoped to remain in Colombia until their replacements arrived in December. However, due to illness, the Souders had to terminate early.

The Souders arrived in Colombia in the spring of 1964. They soon became an integral part of the work of the Colegio Americano in Cachipay. During their years of service the Souders assumed many responsibilities which lightened the load of the missionaries.

They have left behind many friends, especially among the school children and young people of the Cachipay area. The mission staff expresses their thanks to the Souders for the service rendered while in Colombia, and wish them God's blessing as they continue to serve Christ. The Souders are making their home in Lansdale, Pennsylvania.

continue to serve Christ. The Souders are making their home in Lansdale, Pennsylvania.

## VOCATIONAL MISSIONARIES ARRIVE

Two former V.S. workers, Peter and Claire Harder, returned to Colombia in early December. They will work at the Colegio Americano in Cachipay.

The Harders were commissioned as vocational missionaries by the Board of Missions. Peter is an experienced mechanic and Claire is a registered nurse. Mr. and Mrs. Harder, with their two children, Carol and Dennis, studied Spanish in the language school in San Jose, Costa Rica for about four months before arriving in Colombia. We welcome the Harder family to the Colombian staff.



Join Colombian Staff

## KLAASSENS TAKE YEAR FURLOUGH

On December 20, the Glen Klaassen family left Colombia for a one year furlough. This is the second furlough for the Klaassens who have been missionaries in Colombia for seven years.

During their first four years, Glen and Reitha served as teachers at the Normal School in Ibague. The major part of their second term was spent as the directors of the Colegio in Cachipay. Rev. Klaassen was named director of the Mission in 1965.

The Board of Missions and the Colombia staff have granted the Klaassens an extended furlough to provide them with the opportunity to pursue theological studies at the Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana. The Klaassens are expected to move to the Elkhart community following the Christmas holidays.

## BETHEL COLLEGE COUPLE IN COLOMBIA

Larry and Joan Martens joined the expanding V.S. program in Bogota in early fall. They are students at Bethel College who have left their studies to give two years as volunteer workers in the Colombian capital city.

The Martens are teaching English in the Colombian-American Center in Bogota. They attend and participate in the life of the Mennonite Church in Bogota.



From Bethel to Bogota



Klaassens to Seminary

# BOGOTA CHURCH LAYS THE FIRST STONE



Viewing Church Model

In the sunshine and rain, the members of the Bogota Church, symbolically placed on their property a marble plaque, which officially initiated the beginning of the construction of the new church. The inscription on the marble stone reads: "THE FIRST EVANGELICAL MENNONITE CHURCH OF BOGOTA - Founded, May 24, 1964 - Dedicated to The Glory of God."

With nearly every church member present and over one hundred friends and special guests, the Bogota church realized the beginning of the construction of a new church building. Mr. Luis Correa directed the service. Several numbers of special music were presented by the staff and teachers of the Colegio Americano, and the choir of the Bogota church.



Singing at the Service



Lifting First Stone

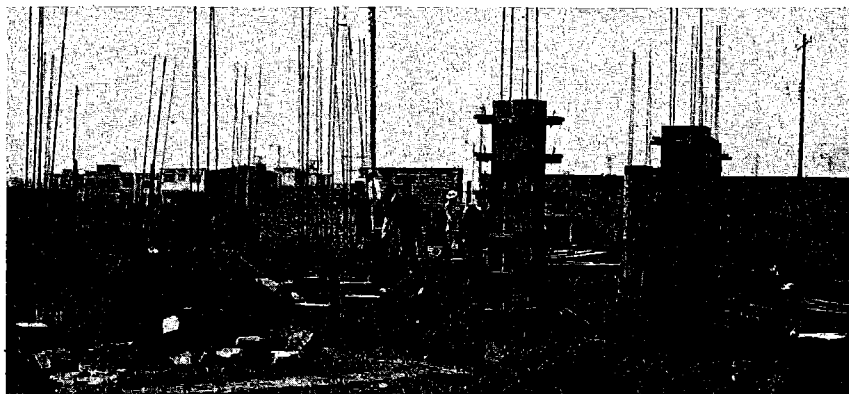
remained until the final benediction in spite of the cool rain.

Rev. Glen Klaassen, director of the Mennonite Mission, spoke words of congratulations to the congregation. Mrs. Edilma Reales, member of the building committee, related some of the important decisions yet to be made and called upon each member to share in the building of the church. Rev. Howard Habegger spoke briefly then led the congregation in the ceremony of laying the first stone. The final choir hymn, building fund offering, and benediction were performed as rain began to fall. Everyone re-



Placing First Stone

Two weeks following the laying of the first stone the actual construction began. Although Bogota is experiencing a severe rainy season, the construction at present is about one month ahead of schedule. The constructor and other building officials believe the entire project will be completed by May of 1967. It is the hope of the congregation that the dedication of the new facilities can take place in May of next year because it will mark the third anniversary of the founding of the church in Bogota.



Bogota Church Under Construction

## COLEGIOS CHANGE DIRECTORS

Important personnel changes will become effective January 1. Miss Vernelle Yoder, former director of Colegio Menno, will become the director of the Colegio Americano in Cachipay during 1967.

Miss Julia Schutz has been assigned as director of the Colegio in La Mesa for the New Year. Miss Janet Soldner, missionary-nurse, will also be stationed in La Mesa in 1967 doing church work and visitation.

Both Colegios are expected to have an excellent staff of national teachers for the new school year.



Keys of Colegios to New Directors

## GRADUATION '66 - CACHIPAY

The chapel of the Colegio Americano was the scene of the 1966 graduation exercises. Parents and friends of the graduating class came from several towns and cities to attend the closing program.

The main speaker for the occasion was Dr. Hector Valencia, rector of the Normal School in Ibague. Dr. Valencia brought an outstanding message directed in a very personal way to the graduates. Nineteen students received their diplomas from Rev. Glen Klaassen.



Cachipay Graduates and Teachers

## GRADUATION '66 - LA MESA

In La Mesa, five students were granted their diplomas at the final graduation program. The sanctuary of the La Mesa church was jammed to capacity to witness the annual event.

Instead of the traditional speaker, a half hour musical program was presented by Dr. and Mrs. Freeman Burkhalter.

Within the graduating class one boy expressed his desire to become a minister of the gospel. Another girl has made a definite decision to continue her schooling toward a profession in teaching.



La Mesa Graduates and Director

## CHRISTIAN MUSICIANS IN COLOMBIA

Dr. and Mrs. Freeman Burkhalter, outstanding musicians, are serving for one year under the Fulbright Commission on Music to Colombia. They are members of the First Mennonite Church of Berne, Indiana, where Dr. Burkhalter has been the Minister of Music for thirty years.

The Burkalters arrived in September and are making their home in Bogota. Both are attending the Mennonite Church in Bogota and assisting the church in music. They performed in the graduation exercises at both Colegios.



Violinist and Pianist

#### ANOLAIMA CONGREGATION INCREASES



New Church Members and their Pastor

The highlight of the Anolaima congregation this fall was the baptism of seven new believers. (One not pictured) Rev. George Ediger, missionary-pastor, performed the baptism and received the group into the fellowship of the church.

Often following the step of Christian baptism and church membership is taken, the new members experience difficulties because of their stand for Christ and the Church. There is often

the temptation to retreat into the accustomed patterns of the old life.

The entire Anolaima congregation will stand with these young Christians in mutual support and prayer. Their enthusiasm, eagerness to witness to their new faith in Christ, and desire to live the Christian life have provided a great source of encouragement to the Anolaima people.

#### EVANGELICAL LEADERS CONFER ON INDIAN WORK

During the first week in November an important conference was held by the evangelical church of Colombia. The conference was attended by twenty-one evangelical groups interested in the unification of the work among the Colombian Indians.

The initiating force behind the conference was the Wycliffe Bible Translators, who are working among some twenty-five Indian tribes in Colombia. Wycliffe encouraged the evangelical church of Colombia to organize a follow-up program of evangelism and church outreach among the Indians. The conference formed a new organization known as "The Evangelical Association For Indian Affairs in Colombia."

The Mennonite Churches and Mission were represented during the three day sessions by Rev. Armando Hernandez, pastor of the Ibague church, and Rev. and Mrs. George Ediger, missionaries in Anolaima.



Indian Work under Discussion

#### CHRISTIANITY AND DENTISTRY

Many a toothache was relieved when Dr. James McCrory came to Colombia as a visiting physician in dental surgery. Dr. and Mrs. McCrory of Berne, Indiana, gave three weeks of their time and professional service to the children of the Mennonite Colegios, and members and friends of the Mennonite Churches of Colombia.

It was obvious that the children found a good friend in the American dentist, who not only extracted their teeth, but also found time to play basketball and other games.

An old dentist chair was pressed into service for Dr. McCrory. Dental equipment was set up in the clinic of the Colegio in Cachipay, but also in Vernelle Yoder's living room for the people in La Mesa, and the Habegger's kitchen in Bogota. Miss Janet Soldner and Miss Estella Alverado



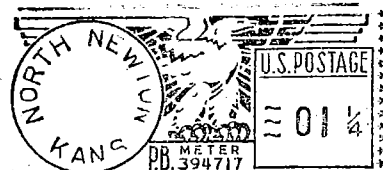
Dentist and Wife Team

served as Dr. McCrory's assistants as well as translating the dentist's instructions into the Spanish language. The mission staff thanks Dr. and Mrs. McCrory for the excellent service rendered to the Colombian people in the name of Christ.

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#### MISSIONARY TOURS LOWER SOUTH AMERICA

During four weeks in October and November, Rev. Howard Habegger, missionary-pastor in Bogota, traveled fifteen thousand miles touring four countries of Lower South America.

Rev. Habegger gave a series of special messages at the Spiritual Emphasis Week at the Mennonite Theological Seminary in Montivideo, Uruguay. In Argentina, Rev. Habegger preached in several Old Mennonite Churches in Buenos Aires and Bragado. He also had the opportunity to visit the Mennonite Colonies in the Chaco of Paraguay and meet both church and colony leaders.

Welcomed to Seminary-Uruguay



The final two weeks of the tour were spent in southern Brazil. Rev. Habegger visited the Mennonite Mission work in Sao Paulo and Campinas. During the thirty-four day tour, he spoke, preached, or related the mission work of Colombia twenty-seven times. Rev. Habegger returned to Bogota on November 16.

#### PRAISE AND PRAYER

PRAISE God for every new believer that has been added to our churches in the past year.  
PRAISE God for the opportunity to have a United Evangelistic Crusade in Bogota during December.  
PRAISE God for the fine new workers preparing to serve in Colombia following language study.  
PRAISE God for the rapid construction of the new church building in Bogota.

PRAY that the Lord will speak to young people at the annual Youth Retreat at Cachipay.  
PRAY that the Lord will bless the Klaassens on furlough as they prepare for future service.  
PRAY for our national pastors and workers who face many difficulties serving Christ in Colombia.  
PRAY for the new V.S. couples serving in Bogota as they teach in secular institutions.

#### Changes of Address for 1967

Miss Vernelle Yoder, Colegio Americano, Cachipay, Cund., Colombia

Miss Janet Soldner, > Miss Julia Schutz, Colegio Menno, Calle 6 # 21-69, La Mesa, Cund., Colombia

Rev. and Mrs. Glen Klaassen, Mennonite Biblical Seminary, 3003 Benham Ave., Elkhart, Indiana 46517, U. S. A.